UNIVERSITIES AND THEIR NEIGHBORHOODS
AN AUC-AUB CONVERSATION
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**PREFACE**

**PART I: AUC Tahrir Campus Case**

**INTRODUCTION**

I. The AUC and Neighborhood Overview
   - AUC Fact Sheet
   - Location Context
   - Historical Context
   - Significance

II. Research Methodology
   - Neighborhood Limits
   - Background Research
   - Workshop Design: Data Collection and Analysis

**THEME 1: RATIONALE FOR NEIGHBORHOOD ENGAGEMENT**

1.1 AUC’s Challenges and Opportunities
   - Accessibility and Securitization of Downtown
   - AUC: A Cultural Hub in Tahrir Square

1.2 Neighborhood’s Challenges and Opportunities
   - Neighborhood Stakeholders Profile
   - Challenges and Opportunities

1.3 Neighborhood Expectations from AUC

1.4 Conclusion

**THEME 2: THE EDGE: PHYSICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CAMPUS AND NEIGHBORHOOD**

2.1 AUC Campus Site

2.2 Neighborhood Physical Profile
   - Overview
   - Usage and Typologies
   - Mobility

2.3 Activities in the Neighborhood
   - AUC Community
   - Other Neighborhood Users

2.4 Conclusion

**PART II: AUC New Cairo Case**

**INTRODUCTION**

III. The AUC and Neighborhood Overview

**THEME 3: THE EXTERNAL CONTEXT: LEGAL AND URBAN MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORKS**

3.1 Urban Management Framework
3.2 Legislative Framework
3.3 Real Estate Market Influences
3.4 Downtown – a Cultural Hub
3.5 Conclusion

**THEME 1: RATIONALE FOR NEIGHBORHOOD ENGAGEMENT**

4.1 AUC’s Challenges and Opportunities
   - AUC Stakeholders Identification
   - AUC Stakeholders’ Needs

4.2 Neighborhood’s Challenges and Opportunities
   - Neighborhood Stakeholders Profile
   - Challenges and Opportunities

4.3 Neighborhood Expectations from AUC

4.4 Conclusion

**PAGE NUMBERS**

THEME 1: RATIONALE FOR NEIGHBORHOOD ENGAGEMENT 6
THEME 2: THE EDGE: PHYSICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CAMPUS AND NEIGHBORHOOD 7
THEME 3: THE EXTERNAL CONTEXT: LEGAL AND URBAN MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORKS 20
PART II: AUC NEW CAIRO CASE 24
THEME 2: THE EDGE: PHYSICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CAMPUS AND NEIGHBORHOOD

5.1 AUC Campus Site 28
5.2 Neighborhood Physical Profile 28
   Overview
   Usage and Typologies
   Townscape and Streetscape
   Mobility

5.3 Activities in the Neighborhood 36
   AUC Community
   Other Neighborhood Users

5.4 Conclusion 37

THEME 3: THE EXTERNAL CONTEXT: LEGAL AND URBAN MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORKS

6.1 Urban Management Framework 38
6.2 Legislative Framework 38
6.3 Real Estate Market Influences 38
6.4 Downtown – a Cultural Hub 38
6.5 Conclusion 38

PART III: AUC STRATEGIC VISION

THEME 4: INGREDIENTS FOR A UNIVERSITY ANCHOR STRATEGY

7.1 Understanding of a Successful Anchor Strategy 40
7.2 Commitment by the University 41
   AUC Civic Engagement History
   AUC Commitment to Civil Engagement
7.3 AUC Neighborhood Initiative 41
   Proposed Institutional Set-up
   Stakeholders Engagement Strategy
   Potential Interventions and Partnerships
7.4 Conclusion 43

LOOKING TO THE NEXT 10 YEARS 44
REFERENCES 45
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 46
**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report presents the main results of preparatory work conducted over the past six months to support the American University in Cairo (AUC) launch its “neighborhood initiative” (NI) and to inform AUC-AUB dialogue on the interaction between universities and their neighborhoods. This will be discussed through the “Universities and their Neighborhoods: an AUC-AUB Conversation” symposium to be held in November 2015 aiming to raise awareness in Egypt on urban universities and their roles in their neighborhoods and the city, and to hold focused discussions on the AUC and American University in Beirut (AUB) cases, and recommend specific next steps for the AUC’s Tahrir Square and New Cairo campuses and the AUB’s Ras Beirut campus.

The AUC-NI adopts a place-based strategic approach that focuses on physical and environmental improvements, combined with a civic engagement approach (the social development side) and an anchor strategy (the economic development side). In this sense the AUC, similar to its sister AUB, is trying to promote sustainable development inside and around its campuses that supports the creation/preservation of a just, livable, and diverse neighborhood.

The information presented in this report is based on two levels of effort that aimed to improve understanding of the place and people within AUC neighborhoods in downtown and New Cairo. The first effort was conducting background research that covered the urban management and legal framework governing the neighbourhood and any interaction with the AUC. The second set of data was collected through field work (two AUC Campus in Context workshops in August and October 2015) that included urban patterns and stakeholders mapping. The urban patterns mapping surveyed typologies of land uses, activities and their locations, and mobility and traffic patterns. The stakeholders mapping and analysis included taking stock of existing neighbors as well as visitors to the area and users of spaces and services.

The report documents all these efforts and is organized in three parts, two parts focusing on each AUC campus: Tahrir Square and New Cairo. Each of these two parts covers three themes that organizes the presentation of the results of the preparatory work:

- **Theme 1:** Rationale For Neighborhood Engagement
- **Theme 2:** The Edge: Physical, Social And Economic Relationships Between Campus And Neighborhood
- **Theme 3:** The External Context: Legal And Urban Management Frameworks
- **Theme 4:** Ingredients For A University Anchor Strategy

The report concludes with Part III that places the AUC-NI within the wider AUC strategic vision for the coming decade in developing a place-based, comprehensive, and institutionally-embedded framework for its anchor strategy approach that engages with the University’s neighboring community. This section includes the fourth analytical theme:

- **Theme 4:** Ingredients For A University Anchor Strategy

Acknowledgement is due to the Neighborhood Initiative at the AUB for its cooperation and financial support of the preparatory work of the AUC-NI through a Ford Foundation grant. Also, acknowledging the effort of a dedicated research team that worked under the supervision and guidance of three AUC staff. Last, but not least acknowledging the initiative and effort of the AUC President, Lisa Anderson.
PART I
AUC TAHRIR CAMPUS CASE
INTRODUCTION

Part I of this report provides a contextual understanding of AUC Tahrir Square campus to inform the discussion during the “Universities and their Neighborhoods: An AUC-AUB Conversation” symposium.

I. THE AUC AND NEIGHBORHOOD OVERVIEW

AUC Fact Sheet

The American University in Cairo (AUC) was established in 1919, and has become one of the leading universities in Africa and the Middle East. AUC currently offers 36 Bachelor’s degrees, 44 Masters’ degrees, and two doctoral degrees in applied sciences and engineering, in addition to various graduate diplomas, and 13 multi-disciplinary research centers. The diversity of programs offered by the AUC and its esteemed position in the region attracts an increasing student population, reaching 6,880 undergraduate and graduate students (Fall 2014), with an operating budget of almost $162 million (2014-2015) and an endowment value of $595 million (2013-2014). The AUC’s continuing education program was established in 1950, which currently serves over 17,000 students annually in non-credit-courses and contracted training programs (DAIR, 2015). Since, the main academic activities moved to the New Cairo campus, the Tahrir Square campus has been primarily functioning through the School of Continuing Education (SCE) and other cultural events.

Location Context

For 88 years the AUC campus was in the heart of downtown Cairo, Tahrir Square. Despite the deteriorating condition of the buildings in downtown and low residential occupancy rate in downtown that has dropped 60% over the past 50 years (2006 census figures compared to 1960 occupancy) (I2UD & Zakaria, 2011), it remains a central and vibrant area in Cairo frequented by thousands on a daily basis for shopping at the affordable retail outlets and social gathering at local coffee shops, not to mention the numerous cinema theatres, art galleries and performance spaces.

Historic Context

Downtown Cairo, also known as Khedival Cairo was developed by Khedive Ismail in the late 1880s to showcase a modern view of Egypt to the world leaders invited to the grand opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. Downtown did not become a cosmopolitan center of commerce and entertainment until the 1930s-1940s with the influx of foreigners to Egypt (Raymond, 2001). The socioeconomic dynamic in downtown witnessed numerous changes tied to political changes, such as the establishment of the Republic in 1952, the withdrawal of foreigners from Egypt, and the “open door” (Infitah) economic policies in the 1970s.
Significance

Long before gaining international recognition as the epicenter of the 2011 revolution and symbol for political expression, downtown Cairo and Tahrir Square have always been of significance to Cairenes and Egyptians in general. It is where vital government institutions are located such as the mega administrative complex, Mogama’ el-Tahrir, the People’s Assembly (lower house of representatives), Shura Council (upper house), and numerous ministries. The headquarters of the National Democratic Party (NDP), – the ruling party at the time of ousted President Mubarak – is currently being demolished and was situated along the Western border of downtown and was one of the few institutions burned by protesters in 2011 as it was perceived as a symbol of political corruption. On the regional level, Tahrir Square also hosts the headquarters of the League of Arab States since its establishment in 1945, which coordinates the cooperation between its 22 member states. Walking distance from the Tahrir Square campus is one of the most frequented tourist destinations in Egypt, the Egyptian Museum, which receives over 2 million annual visitors. Downtown and neighboring Garden City (South-West of downtown) has a high concentration of foreign embassies, including the American, British and Canadian embassies, among many others.
II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In order to understand the contexts surrounding the Tahrir Square campus, a research study was conducted to understand the nature of the area surrounding the campus, and to elaborate on what the AUC expects or wants from its neighborhood. The study consisted of background research, in addition to fieldwork conducted in workshop (October 2015). The research outcomes – presented in this report – provide a baseline for potential future interventions by the University. These efforts also provide a solid knowledge base of the institutional, legal and urban governance frameworks governing the university’s surrounding and the relationships among their stakeholders, in addition to a peak into the activity patterns within the neighborhood.

Neighborhood Limits

The study boundary included significant areas surrounding the AUC campus and Tahrir Square. The study area was extended North to Talaat Harb Street, one of the most commercially active streets in downtown; south to Magles al-Shaab st. and east to Nobar st. to include major institutions such as the People’s Assembly and the Ministry of Interior which have a significant impact on the securitization of downtown. Finally, eastward, it was extended to the Nile front including the Egyptian Museum and NDP headquarters. Due to turbulent political events over the last four years, the government has tightened security of many areas in downtown due to the agglomeration of vital public institutions and foreign embassies in the area. As such, security permission to collect data south of the University campus could not be obtained.

Background Research

The background research aimed to develop a better understanding of the legal and institutional contexts governing the AUC that shape the constraints and potentials for the neighborhood initiative. It also involved collecting relevant published data – all which will form the basis for a repository of information to draw from in the future.

Workshop Design: Data Collection and Analysis

A four-day workshop was organized in October 2015, the “AUC Campus in Context: Tahrir Square” workshop, with 15 participants supervised by a team of AUC faculty members and researchers. The participants included undergraduate (third and fourth year) and graduate students of Architecture from different universities. Conducted over two weekends, workshop participants mapped urban patterns, activities and uses in the study area, to better understand how the University’s surroundings are being used after the majority of academic activities have been relocated to New Cairo. Mobility and access to Tahrir Square campus were also examined.

Downtown Cairo has been researched extensively, particularly the northern part of the selected study area, where the commercial, financial, social and cultural hubs are located. Thus, data was collected in more detail from the area encompassed by Tahrir and Sheikh Raihan Streets, to identify activities and urban patterns in the immediate vicinity of the AUC campuses.

The workshop design was to utilize this understanding of the physical environment to feed into the second phase of the data collection, the stakeholder and community perception analysis. Identifying different interest groups, communities, and institutions influenced by the AUC or affecting it, allows for a better understanding of their roles in the neighborhood and how they perceive the AUC as an institution in their neighborhood and what they expect it to be or do. Due to security limitation, interviews could not be conducted to examine this dimension. The report therefore portrays the perception of the research team through their institutional knowledge, experiences and research of different neighborhood stakeholders.
**THEME 1: RATIONALE FOR NEIGHBORHOOD ENGAGEMENT**

**1.1 AUC’S CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

**Accessibility and Securitization of Downtown**

Being located in the center of a city such as Cairo comes with its challenges. Operations at the Tahrir Square campus are sensitive to the national political climate. For instance, Tahrir Square campus operations were suspended during the 2011 revolution and subsequent political unrests. This of course, negatively impacts service delivery at the AUC and its constituency. Even when the campus is operational, accessibility has been negatively impacted by the closure of Sadat Metro Station across from the campus for almost two years (2013-2015) and the continuing increased security and barriers of many streets surrounding the Ministry of Interior – and due to close proximity also the AUC campus. This not only limits accessibility but also prevents the AUC community from feeling comfortable and part of the area.

Downtown is one of the most walkable areas in Cairo, however vehicular mobility is not optimum due to the high traffic flow. The AUC community does not have designated parking area as in the New Cairo campus, leaving those who decide to drive with few affordable parking options. This is discussed more in the report.

**AUC: A Culture Hub in Tahrir**

In its 2015-2019 Strategic Plan, the AUC acknowledged the need for an initiative to “examine how the facilities of the Tahrir Square campus will be repurposed as a downtown cultural center, illustrating the catalytic role universities can play in invigorating cultural life in their communities and neighborhoods” (AUC, 2015, p. 22). The current operations in the AUC Tahrir Square campus are largely based on: the School of Continuing Education and the population it serves, special events held at the historic Ewart and Oriental Halls, and the AUC Press bookstore and cafe. The programming at the campus is largely limited to intellectual lectures and panels commenting on current issues. There is potential for the campus to be utilized more fully to act as a more effective cultural center.

**1.2 NEIGHBORHOOD’S CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

**Neighborhood Stakeholders Profile**

The geographic, political, cultural and commercial centrality of downtown renders it one of the most contested spaces in Cairo, with many interests in how it is operated and developed. On the governmental level, as mentioned there are numerous central public administration entities located in the area, some focused on their own operation with little interest in how downtown operates, while others have vested interest and influence in how downtown develops. Looking at the non-governmental side, there is a diverse and strong presence of the private sector in downtown, ranging from large financial institutions and large businesses, to small- and medium-sized enterprises and street vendors. The civil society presence in downtown is also very diverse, including residential groups, artists, cultural institutions, educational institutions, and activist groups, among many others. The next theme will elaborate on how some of these groups influence and use the area surrounding the AUC Tahrir Square campus.

**Challenges and Opportunities**

Downtown Cairo currently faces numerous obstacles to preserve the diversity that is a core part of its identity, while upgrading its many deteriorating and suffering pockets. This can be partly attributed to the lack of real conversations between different stakeholder groups to find a common ground to redevelop the area.

The AUC views the existence of this engaged pool of stakeholders in downtown as an important corner stone for the initiation of a fruitful conversation centering on the development of downtown for everyone. As will be discussed further in Part III of this report, the AUC’s strategic plan for the coming 5 years includes the establishment of community councils to facilitate open communication between the University and its neighbors and share common interests.
1.3 NEIGHBORHOOD EXPECTATIONS FROM AUC

Prior to the relocation in 2007, the AUC community was one of the main economic drivers in the immediate neighborhood in Tahrir. The relocation of the campus, followed several years later by extreme political turbulence in the area after 2011 caused a significant stress on the economic vitality of the area with many businesses closing. The general sentiment of neighboring businesses is that the increased utilization of the AUC Tahrir Square campus will benefit them financially.

1.4 CONCLUSION

• The Tahrir Square campus is impacted by the limited accessibility in certain parts surrounding the AUC Tahrir campus due to increased security measures in the vicinity of critical government institutions.
  • The University envisions the long-term use of Tahrir Square campus as a vibrant cultural institution in downtown.
  • Downtown Cairo has diverse stakeholder groups; limited communication between them is a challenge to the area’s future development.
  • The AUC wants to promote dialogue between different groups to push forward the development of the area, while preserving its diverse nature.
  • The economic vitality of the area surrounding the Tahrir Square campus has been negatively impacted by the relocation of the University’s academic activities and political events following 2011.
2.1 AUC TAHRIR CAMPUS SITE

The Tahrir Square campus is divided into 3 complexes: the Main Campus, Falaki Academic Center, and the Greek Campus, which collectively constitute the nine-acre campus. The Main campus is home to the historic palace, which houses the Oriental and Ewart Memorial Halls, as well as the Margon Veillon Gallery of Modern Egyptian Art and two smaller exhibition spaces. Tahrir Square campus also hosts the AUC Tahrir Library and the AUC Press bookstore and café.

The majority of activities in Main and Falaki are that of the School of Continuing Education, in addition to a few research centers, and special events held at the Oriental and Ewart Halls. The Greek Campus is rented under a 10-year lease agreement and has been transformed into a technology park and culture venue called “the GrEEK Campus,” and the Falaki Theatre in the Falaki campus is operated by Studio Emad Eddin Foundation, an NGO that supports performing artists.

Access to campus is controlled, although less rigorous than the New Cairo Campus due to the regularity of public events held at the Tahrir Square campus. Personal identification is required at public events, otherwise access is limited to University ID holders or those invited by faculty or staff.

3.2 NEIGHBORHOOD PHYSICAL PROFILE

Overview

Downtown Cairo boasts an interesting variety of architectural styles and registered heritage buildings. The physical and structural conditions of these buildings are primarily poor due to little-to-no maintenance by owners. This will be discussed further in section 3.3 “Real Estate Market Influences.” As expected from the center of a bustling city as Cairo, downtown is frequented by all walks of life as it fulfills the needs of a wide variety of people.

The government initiated interest in regaining its presence in the public sphere in 2013, which was followed by announcing revitalization plans for downtown. It launched a multi-phase development project focusing on important nodes in downtown, such as Tahrir Square, and the streets leading to Talaat Harb Square. The revitalization project was launched in August 2014 with the controversial removal of unlicensed street vendors that have overtaken several streets in downtown. The areas of intervention are mostly in the North and Northwest parts of downtown, with the exception of the upgrading of the Abdin Palace Square, currently underway, where the Governorate of Cairo is located.

Taking a closer look at the area immediately surrounding the Tahrir Square campus, as mentioned before, the commercial activity in the area was heavily impacted by recent events and is comparatively less active than northern parts of Downtown with concentrated retail activities such as Talaat Harb and Qasr el-Nile Streets. The Main campus and the Falaki Center are in extreme proximity to sensitive public administration buildings such as the Ministry of Interior, the People’s Assembly, and the Mogama’ Administrative Complex in Tahrir Square.
Usage and Typologies

The land use mapping conducted by The International Institute for Urban Development (IIUD) and Mona Zakaria’s downtown assessment study in 2011 (IIUD and Zakaria, 2011) was used as a baseline and was updated with minor changes to uses in the area. Downtown is a mixed-use community, not only within the area, but often within each building as well. The majority of buildings – with the exception of large public administration buildings – host different types of commercial activities on the ground level, the rest of the building is often a mixture of offices, small hotels, storage space for commercial activities on the ground level, residences, and vacant units. Not to mention that the rooftops of some buildings have been transformed to one-bedroom apartments for lower-income families and more recently artistic studios. This mixed use, multi-class character is captured in the literary form in Alaa Alasway’s ‘Omarat Ya’coubian.

Nonetheless, one can find concentrated ground level functions in specific areas of downtown. For instance, Meret Basha St. (along Tahrir Square) is a hub for travel agencies and souvenir bazaars for its proximity to the Egyptian Museum and a high flux of tourists. Similarly, other street blocks are known for retail shopping (particularly clothing and electronics), mechanic repair shops, or schools. Alternatively, there are buildings with an almost unified usage, such as one on Tahrir St. (North of the Greek campus) which almost exclusively hosts healthcare service providers. It is worth noting that despite the mixed-use nature of downtown, residential usages has decreased significantly over the last few decades.

Land Use Map: (IIUD); Zakaria, (2011).
Mobility

Barriers and Obstructions
Different types of obstructions are scattered around the campus limiting vehicular and pedestrian mobility. For instance, pedestrian and vehicular mobility are limited by the handful of streets completely blocked by walls constructed post 2011. Some of these walls were transformed to gates that can be closed if unrest is foreseen. Other forms intentionally control pedestrian mobility to prevent the common practice of jaywalking. This often proves to be unsuccessful as pedestrians opt to walking on the street outside the placed fences. This is in addition to temporary construction work, and illegal commercial encroachments.
Public Transportation:
Downtown is well-connected to most, if not all, modes of public transportation. One of Cairo’s central bus and minibus stations (Abd el-Min‘im Riad) is located at the northern tip of downtown, in addition to a regional bus terminal. Four metro stations service downtown; the Sadat Metro station, which is in Tahrir Square across from the Main campus, is a transfer station between the two most used metro lines, and the closest to the bus station. The metro is one of the most popular mode of public transportation used to access downtown. Despite the reopening of the Sadat Metro station earlier this year, four of its eight exits remain closed.
Access to Tahrir Square campus:
All of the above influence how the Tahrir Square campus is accessed and which entry points are open to the AUC community and the public. Four of the 11 gates of the three campuses are permanently closed due to security issues, with two additional ones conditionally accessible. The AUC Press bookstore has undergone a recent renovation (October 2015), which included the reopening of the one of the gates of the Main campus for direct access to the bookstore.

Personal Vehicles:
Traffic congestion can be at a standstill during end-of-workday rush hour, making it inconvenient to use a car during those times. This is in addition to the limited affordable options for parking in downtown as a result of the recent strict prohibition of street parking along all major streets in downtown. To compensate for the shortage there are several multi-level parking facilities, but the hourly rate can be expensive if one is to spend many hours in the area (Awatta, 2015). As such, many users opt to park their cars next to a metro station and access downtown by metro. Due to the different walls constructed around the AUC (to securitize neighboring government entities), a few streets became dead ends, which evolved into parking lots managed by informal parking attendants for a more affordable flat daily rate. The close proximity of these streets to the University campus make it the most attractive option for those visiting the AUC. However, its limited capacity cannot accommodate all users.
2.3 ACTIVITIES IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

AUC Community

The activities of the AUC community in the neighborhood were not mapped during the Campus in Context workshop. This will be on the coming research agenda.

Other Neighbourhood Users

User Profile

A clear observation when walking in downtown is that the majority of users are males, covering a wide age base from students to senior citizens. Women are not as common in downtown, particularly in the evening. This alludes to the perception of downtown as a space unwelcoming to women, although this view has significantly decreased over the past ten years with increasing number of young women frequenting coffee shops and cultural venues in downtown.
Commercial Activities

Many of the side streets north of the AUC are partially overtaken by shops illegally encroaching on public space to display their merchandise. Another type of common street commercial activity in the area is the street vendor. Unlike the street vendors removed from downtown, these mobile and stationary vendors are licensed to operate and often serve traditional breakfast or lunch (operate mostly during the daytime) or are stationary books and newspaper, or fruit/vegetable vendors. Both types tend to be located at street intersections with high pedestrian flow.
Youth Activities
The AUC campus is neighbor to two public schools (one secondary and the other a high school) and one private French primary and secondary school, who become the main users of the area during after-school hours during the academic years. They utilize different spaces (such as dead end streets and the plaza in front of the Mogama’ complex) and transform them into playing and hangout areas.
1.4 CONCLUSION

• There has been increased interest from the government in undertaking development projects in different parts of downtown, most prominently Tahrir Square.

• Mixed-use nature of downtown is one of the most diverse in the city, with several concentrated specialty commercial areas. However it suffers from a decreasing residential population.

• Different modes of public transportation make access to Tahrir Square campus from other parts of Cairo easy, particularly after the reopening of Sadat Metro Station.

• The presence of three schools with a student population age from primary to high schools students within a 500-meter radius of the University campus, and the numerous streets vendors and commercial encroachments have an impact on the prevalent activities and types of users in the area.
THEME 3: THE EXTERNAL CONTEXT: LEGAL AND URBAN MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORKS

3.1 URBAN MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The area commonly known as downtown Cairo is in fact administratively divided between two districts: Gharb (West) and Abdin. However the significance of the area results in the heavy involvement of the Governorate of Cairo, which is the entity orchestrating the current downtown revitalization project. Local Popular Councils (LPCs) is the only local public administrative entity elected by constituents on the district level to represent their interests and hold the local administrative districts accountable to the public (TADAMUN, n.d. c). However, LPCs have been dismantled in 2011 pending legislative reforms to reinstate them, leaving the public with no avenue to voice their concerns with the local administration.

3.2 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The utilization of public space for commercial activities or as a sphere for political expression in Egypt is strictly regulated by legislation. The Obstructions Law No. (140/1956) governs unlicensed use of public space and obstructions to traffic in Egypt, and primarily regulates its appropriation for private commercial activities. Street vending is common practice in Egypt, most of which is unlicensed. Article 13 of the mentioned law fines violators 100-300 Egyptian Pounds (EGP) ($13-40 USD) and removes obstructions that “impact public safety, health, traffic flow, [or] public morality” at owner’s expense (Awatta, 2015). The affordable fine does not act as a deterrent to encroachments on public space, however the heavy security presence in downtown prevents them from occurring in main streets.

The use of the public sphere for political expression is regulated by the “Organization of the right to public meetings parades, and peaceful protests” Law No. (107/2013). The legislation was formulated in the aftermath of turbulent political changes in the country. Over the last five years, Tahrir Square has been the most popular gathering point for mass political mobilization or protests in the country. Groups interested in holding a protest are now obligated according to articles 8, 17, and 19 of the above legislation to attain the approval of the local police station before holding a protest, and violators face up to EGP 300,000 ($39,000 USD) in fines and 2-7 years of imprisonment (Awatta, 2015). The legislation has been enforced in numerous cases and has successfully controlled the eruption of mass protests in the city.

Traffic violations such as double parking and/or parking in undesignated areas are one of the leading causes to traffic congestions in Cairo. The Traffic Law No. (66/1973) amended by Law No. (155/1999) regulates traffic and use of roads, and similar to fines to unlicensed use of public space, illegal parking is one of the most affordable traffic fines (EGP 50, approximately $6.5 USD), rendering it very inefficient in limiting the practice (Awatta, 2015). Similar to the Obstructions Law, what deems it successful is not the law itself but rather the heavy presence of security in downtown.

3.3 REAL ESTATE MARKET INFLUENCES

One of the main obstacles impeding development of downtown is the implication of the decades-old controlled rent legislation. Lease agreements on properties built before 1996 are subject to Law No. (136/1981), which prevents property owners from terminating lease agreements or raising the rent on tenants. This measure was first introduced in 1952 and underwent several modifications (McCall, 1988). The limited revenue collected by property owners and lost investment opportunities are a major deterrent in maintaining properties and also contribute to the high vacancy rate in downtown, as tenants can afford to pay the rent and live in a second apartment.

Al Ismaelia Real Estate Investment (R.E.A.) is a development company which has purchased 22 buildings in downtown to date, with plans to upgrade them and the area surrounding their clustered properties to re-attract the higher-income population that has deserted downtown decades ago in favour of new cities. Its business model is highly dependent on cultivating and supporting cultural activities in downtown to attract more users from higher socioeconomic background (Awatta, 2015). Interestingly, the largest real estate owner in downtown is the public sector in the form of Misr Real Estate Assets (MREA), a subsidiary of Misr Insurance Holding Company (MIHC). MREA owns and manages over 140 properties in downtown, with over 60% occupied under controlled rent agreements (Ibid).
4.4 DOWNTOWN: A CULTURAL HUB

1. AUC Tahrir Campus (Ewart Memorial Hall, Oriental Hall, Bartlett Fountain Area)
2. AUC Press Bookstore (AUC)
3. The GrEEK Campus (AUC)
4. Falaki Theatre (AUC)
5. Cimatheque
6. Contemporary Image Collective (CIC)
7. Cinema Zawya
8. Rawabet Theatre
9. Townhouse Gallery
10. Cinema Radio
11. Atelier du Caire
12. Mashrabia Art Gallery
13. VENT
14. Qasr Al-Nile Theatre
15. Goethe Institute
16. Al-Balad Cultural Center
17. Al Kawkab Art Space
18. El Mastaba Centre for Folk Music

Cultural Venues: #1, #2, #3, #4, #5, #6, #7, #8, #9, #10, #11, #12, #13, #14, #15, #16, #17, #18
AUC Buildings: #1, #2, #3, #4, #5, #6, #7, #8, #9, #10, #11, #12, #13, #14, #15, #16, #17, #18
3.5 CONCLUSION

• Public space in downtown is heavily controlled by the government with the exception of minimal commercial activities on low-traffic streets

• The development of the urban fabric in downtown is constricted by outdated control rent laws, which make it financially unfeasible for private investors to invest in the area.

• Al Ismaelia is the only real estate investment firm that is attempting to break that model by also supporting cultural activities in downtown. AUC as a potentially more effective cultural hub can also play an instrumental role in this dynamic.

FOOTNOTES


2 The government issued a decree to demolish the NDP headquarters building in early 2015, which is currently underway. This was a controversial decision with many in the architectural community pleading for the preservation of the building as part of Cairo’s modern heritage.

3 The National Organization of Urban Harmony (NOUH) registers heritage buildings deemed as of “architectural significance” but are shy of the 100-year threshold for monument registration with the Ministry of Antiquities.

4 Refer to Awatta (2015) for more on the government upgrading plans in downtown.

5 The prevalence of residence in building rooftops in downtown has significantly decreased in the 1990s after a large-scale government initiative to remove these illegal additions.

6 Note that three metro stations are located north of the study boundary, within 20-30 minute walking distance from AUC Tahrir Square campus.

7 Refer to TADAMUN: The Cairo Urban Solidarity Initiative for more information on the roles of the Governorate (TADAMUN, n.d. a) and administrative districts (TADAMUN, n.d. b).

8 Refer to Al Ismaelia’s website http://al-ismaelia.com for more on their plans for the development of downtown.

9 MIHC is a publicly owned enterprise that was created in 2006 to be a parent company for the different state insurance companies.
PART II

AUC NEW CAIRO
CAMPUS CASE
INTRODUCTION

III. THE AUC AND NEIGHBORHOOD OVERVIEW

Location Context

Since its establishment in 1919, the AUC campus was in Tahrir Square, the heart of Cairo. However, the nine-acre campus was proving insufficient to serve the increasing student population, and in 1997 the University decided to relocate its academic activities to a newly-designed campus in New Cairo – the new eastern extension of the capital – 35 kms from the Tahrir Square campus. Students attending the AUC in 2007 were the first to experience the 290-acre New Cairo Campus. New Cairo has experienced most of its development over the past 15 years, and has evolved into a city catering to its upper-middle income communities. It is worthy of noting that the city has further increased in significance after the announcement in March 2015 of the establishment of the “New Capital City”, east of New Cairo.10

Significance

Despite the rapid rate of urban development in New Cairo, the AUC campus remains as one of the largest non-residential developments in the city to date, and one of the city’s landmarks. The AUC was and remains to be a magnet for urban development in the new city. At the time of its construction, the area surrounding the campus was largely undeveloped, and currently it is surrounded by numerous residential complexes and commercial centers heavily marketed as being in close proximity to the AUC Campus, and many more under construction.

On another front, the AUC prides itself in the campus’ sustainable design, and being one of the few institutions in the country that was designed and is continuously monitored for a sustainable operation and limited carbon footprint. 11

Part II of the AUC report provides a contextual understanding of the AUC New Cairo Campus in preparation for the discussions during the “Universities and their Neighborhoods: An AUC-AUB Conversation” symposium.
In order to understand the contexts surrounding the New Cairo Campus, a research study was conducted to examine the bilateral relationship between the campus and its neighborhood from physical, economic and social perspectives. The study consisted of background research, in addition to fieldwork conducted in August 2015, during the “AUC Campus in Context: New Cairo” workshop. The research outcomes – presented in this report – provide a baseline for potential future interventions by the University. These efforts also provide a solid knowledge base of the institutional, legal and urban governance frameworks impacting the New Cairo campus’ surrounding and the relationships among their stakeholders, in addition to a peak into the activity patterns within the neighborhood.

### Neighborhood Limits

The sprawling nature of New Cairo dictated covering more than the immediate area surrounding the AUC Campus in the research study. As such, the study area in New Cairo was divided into two zones: the area immediately surrounding the campus, and the 10 km strip along Road 90 – the main traffic corridor in New Cairo – leading to the University campus.

### Background Research

The background research aimed to develop a better understanding of the legal and institutional contexts governing the AUC in New Cairo that shape the constraints and potentials for neighborhood interaction. It also involved collecting relevant data, all which will form the basis for a repository of information to draw from in the future.

### Workshop Design

The AUC Campus in Context New Cairo workshop was conducted over ten days in August 2015 with 12 participants from different universities in Cairo, two-thirds of which were third and fourth year undergraduate students and the remainder graduate students. Participants were supervised by a team of AUC faculty members and researchers.

Being a young (less than thirty years old) and fast developing city, there is limited field research conducted and data available on New Cairo. Workshop participants carried out urban patterns mapping to unravel the context and dynamics within the campus’s surrounding through activity and usage mapping. It also briefly mapped mobility to/from and within New Cairo, as well as the urban fabric in the new city. This understanding of the physical environment fed into the second phase of the data collection, the stakeholder mapping. The stakeholder mapping identified different interest groups, communities, and institutions influenced by the AUC or affecting it, to understand their roles in the neighborhood and how they perceive the AUC as an institution in their neighborhood and what they expect it to be or do. This activity included a range of stakeholders such as, neighboring businesses, residential complexes and local administration.

The workshop scope was shaped by security constraints, which regulated interaction with the neighborhood to a limited number of short interviews with businesses (formal establishments and informal street vendors) and a handful of educational entities in New Cairo. It impeded interviewing New Cairo residents to gather their perspectives.
THEME 1: RATIONALE FOR NEIGHBORHOOD ENGAGEMENT

4.1 AUC’S CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

AUC Stakeholders Identification
AUC is an institution with a large number of staff, faculty and students. The university and its sub-institutions have very diverse relationships with their surrounding, ranging from research work, to faculty and staff accommodation, suppliers of services, or collaborative neighbors on issues of common interest. Therefore, the exploration of what is there in the neighborhood was not enough; it is equally important to explore the interests, activities and agendas within the AUC in regards to the neighborhood. This resulted in identifying interested and potential stakeholders within the university and engaging them in strategic thinking and planning for future engagement with the neighborhood during the “Universities and their Neighborhoods” symposium and ideas labs.

AUC Stakeholders’ Needs

Creating a Vibrant AUC Community in New Cairo
According to the AUC Strategic Plan 2014-2019, the AUC is gradually attracting the AUC community (faculty and students) to relocate to New Cairo as property owners or renting apartments near campus (AUC, 2015). In 2013, 12% of AUC students reported living in New Cairo, with that figure increasing with newer cohorts (Tutwiler et al, 2015). This adds new demands on the University, but also new possibilities, to “enliven our New Cairo campus, matching the remarkable physical facilities with a comparably vibrant culture of activity and community” (AUC, 2015, p.21). Further, the University acknowledges the needs of faculty and students who live and work at the University in New Cairo, particularly those relating to “how, and how much, we provide food, housing, transportation and pedestrian access to and around the campus” (Ibid, p. 22). All of which are important aspects to create a sustainable community with favourable quality of life.

Engaging with the Neighboring Community
The engagement with the surrounding community is important for the sustainability of the New Cairo campus as it’s the cornerstone to creating a livable and diverse community that “will provide opportunities for AUC affiliates to live in the neighborhood and for new neighbors to enjoy the amenities associated with University life” (AUC, 2015, p.9). This engagement will revitalize the publicly accessible services on campus and utilize these facilities to their maximum benefit of the University and neighboring community.

Planning for Growth
This will also assist in “identify[ing] demand trends among both international students and local students who elect to live in University-sponsored housing, and explore opportunities for collaboration with private developers in New Cairo interested in providing housing for students and other University affiliates” (AUC, 2015, p.15).

Interacting with Commercial Establishments
It is important for the University to react upon adjacent businesses, particularly with businesses who cater for the needs of AUC students and faculty and the University, particularly with several shopping malls recently opening across from Gates 1, 4 and 5. These off-campus services impact the University on several levels including “our own food service and operating hours, to our safety and security measures. Investing in safe ways to cross what are increasingly busy streets and insuring a pedestrian neighborhood will be a high priority” (AUC, 2015, p. 22).
4.2 NEIGHBORHOOD’S CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Neighbourhood Stakeholders Profile

Three stakeholder groups were approached during the AUC Campus in Context workshop: commercial businesses (shopping malls and restaurant/ café hubs), residential compounds, and large service providers (educational institutes and sporting clubs). These groups were approached due to the dominance of their activities in New Cairo and ease of access to their representatives.

Challenges and Opportunities

Despite being a city largely developed for high-income constituency, New Cairo faces several challenges:

- Limited sense of community and social cohesion as a result of the highly segregated nature of the city
- Minimal public transportation access to the city and the lack thereof within the city
- High vehicle-dependence and low walkability due to high urban sprawl and limited appropriate pedestrian infrastructure (shading elements, sidewalks, etc.)
- Poor condition of street paving in many secondary roads due to continuous construction and infrastructure upgrading in the city
- Limited services or infrastructure suitable and affordable to the significant population of low-income workers that support the development and operation of New Cairo.

Some of these challenges could be addressing through partnerships with the private sectors’ Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs in large corporations, which have exhibited increasing investment and commercial interests in the area.

4.3 NEIGHBORHOOD EXPECTATION FROM AUC

The stakeholder groups contacted were interested in the prospect of the AUC being more involved with its surrounding. Commercial stakeholders were interested in increasing their market through more access to the AUC community.

A few of the residential compounds had a significant percentage of the AUC community either owning or renting property. Their interest in the potential activities of the AUC in the neighborhood were limited to the AUC collaborating with the City Administration to upgrade the paving in streets surrounding where they are located as their interests were more introvert on their residents.

The education institutions interviewed were a neighboring university and several international private high schools. The high schools were very interested in developing educational programs for their students to prepare them for university.

4.4 CONCLUSIONS

- AUC is trying to attract its community to relocate to New Cairo to create a vibrant, sustainable neighbourhood that benefits the university, the AUC community and the neighbourhood as a whole.
- Community engagement is an important aspect of AUC long-term vision and the sustainability of publicly-accessed AUC services.
- A limited sense of community is one of the main social issues in New Cairo, which also manifests in the absence of a heterogeneous population.
- Similar to other new urban communities in Egypt, New Cairo has limited access to the public transportation network and exceeds Cairo in its unfriendliness to pedestrians.
- Identified expectations from the AUC could be categorized into: collaborations with neighbouring businesses, the City Administration, or with other educational institutes.
THEME 2: THE EDGE: PHYSICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CAMPUS AND NEIGHBORHOOD

5.1 AUC CAMPUS SITE
The AUC New Cairo campus is built on a 290-acre property, approximately 10 kms east along the 90 Road entrance to New Cairo from the Ring Road, and 9 kms south of the Cairo-Suez Highway. Sasaki and Abdel-Halim CDC developed the campus master plan and led a team of five firms to design the campus buildings. The campus design is highly entrenched in the concepts of sustainability and creating a conducive learning environment, while retaining references to the Tahrir Square campus’ architectural sense.

The New Cairo campus has five entry gates whose access is restricted to AUC community or guests, with the exception of Gate 1, the visitors’ gate, which provides public (yet monitored) access to the Admissions Office, the Sharjah Art Gallery, the Malak Gabr Theatre, and the amphitheatre, which holds several musical events during the academic year.

5.2 NEIGHBOURHOOD PHYSICAL PROFILE
Overview
As mentioned earlier, New Cairo is a city whose continuous development is largely catered to high-income residents, despite its original raison d’être of providing public housing for limited-income families. This manifests in its sprawling nature and high vehicle-dependence, which provides an attractive alternative to the highly-dense and overpopulated Cairo. The majority of residences are within gated compounds, offering a higher sense of security and exclusivity to their residents. This sense of exclusivity is translated into many of the city services, as commercial and educational activities concentrated in New Cairo are tailored to these users and their preferences.

Usage and Typologies
The area surrounding the AUC campus can be divided into three types: gated residential communities, commercial and dining hubs, and constructions sites. Over the last few years, the commercial activities increased significantly around the AUC with two restaurant/café complexes and a shopping mall – which includes a cinema multiplex – all within a 2-km radius of the campus. Constructions sites surrounding campus boast ads of more upscale gated residential compounds, and a five-star hotel.
LAND USE

- Compund Service, no public access
- Military
- Sporting club
- Health Care
- Educational
- Villa
- Apartement
- Religious
- Vacant
- Commercial, Entertainment, Dining
- Office/Administration
- Mixed use: Com/Office
- Under Construction
Occupancy Rates of Neighboring Residential Compounds

- Concord: 0%
- Retaj: 85%
- El-Masrawya: 90%
- Garden Park: 75%
- Hay Arabia: 70%
- El-Aseel: 0%
- Sun Rise: 70%
- Paradise: 8%
- El Patio: 16%
- Mountain View 1: 30%
- Katameya Breeze: 6%
- Zizania Garden: 5%
- Lina Springs: 40%
- Joly Hights: 8%
- Residence Haya: 20%
- Gannaty: 2%
- The Villa: 30%
- Dorra: 80%
- Mina Residence: 35%
Residential Uses

During the workshop, the nature of the residential uses around the AUC campus was investigated, illustrating a majority of gated residential compounds and some stand-alone residential buildings on the outskirts of the study area. The study conducted during the workshop included 19 residential compounds surrounding the AUC campus. According to the estimates of the administrations of these compounds, the average occupancy rate is 35%, with only six compounds boasting occupancy of over 50% and seven compounds with less than 10% occupancy. It is worth noting that according to the administration of El-Masraweya residential compound, which is 2 km west of the campus, it has a 90% occupancy rate – the highest surveyed – and the administration also stated that approximately 20-30% of their units are leased/owned by AUC-affiliated persons.

Commercial Uses

Comparatively, the 10-km strip on Road 90 leading to the campus from the Ring Road is more established and can be divided between scattered residential buildings, and commercial and business concentrations. The majority of commercial activities are concentrated in two shopping malls at the entrance of New Cairo – “Cairo Festival City” and “Downtown Katameya” – both of which became an attractive destination not only for New Cairenes but for other residents of Cairo as well. As we come closer to the campus, one finds two other landmarks; a five-star hotel (Dusit Thani LakeView) and a private University (Future University). It is worth mentioning that New Cairo has become an attraction point for newly-established private universities, with four university campuses, all of which are affiliated with western educational institutions.
Townscape and Streetscape
The abundance of land in New Cairo and the desert nature gave planners an opportunity unavailable in Cairo, resulting in a city planned on a low population density model and significantly wider streetscape than Cairo. Green spaces are seen scattered along the exterior walls of residential compounds and in main street medians, with few public green spaces that are inviting and accessible to the general public. This combined with the lack of shading elements and seating furniture, and limited operational street lighting off of main streets resulted in a city that is hardly walkable with a high vehicle-dependency as discussed in the coming section.
Mobility

Modes of Transportation

When the master plan for New Cairo was prepared, the government had plans for a new metro line to connect New Cairo to the rest of the city, with the final station located at the AUC campus. However, these plans never materialized and access to and within New Cairo is largely based on personal cars. Public transportation to New Cairo campus is limited to one bus line that connects Tahrir Square to New Cairo (ending at AUC campus) that runs at 60-90 minute intervals. This leaves those with no access to cars limited options to move around and come into the new city, not only the AUC community but also particularly the thriving service industry (construction workers, security guards, custodians, and other limited-income employees).

This problem is not unique to New Cairo but is a significant issue for most new cities in Egypt, often combated by improvising informal means of mass transportation. In addition to taxis, which are often scarce and unaffordable, there is a network of microbuses that connect New Cairo to the rest of the city. These microbus routes only run along three main roads in New Cairo before returning back to the city, leaving transportation within New Cairo with fewer options. People resort to informally-operated mass transportation options, such as the “Suzuki’s” (in reference to the vehicle manufacturer), which are more expensive than microbuses – yet relatively still affordable – and operate as an unlicensed taxi/microbus with unspecific routes or reliability. The most affordable option for moving around in New Cairo is pickup trucks, which often transport construction workers from sites to transportation hubs in the city.

The majority of AUC community rely on the University’s 13-route bus service to access campus. A survey conducted in 2012 and 2013 show that 68% of AUC students access campus with the bus service (Tutwiler et al, 2015). Commuting by car was recorded at 30% for students, who rely on the eight parking lots available to AUC community with a capacity of 1770 cars through semester or year-long subscriptions, or daily payment (Ibid). The same survey shows that only 6% of private car users carpool to campus, despite the University promoting carpooling as a more sustainable and affordable travel option. The University also supported the launch of a carpooling website in 2013 (http://carpooling.aucegypt.edu) to facilitate this commute option and waived parking fees for carpoolers.
Transportation Nodes and Flow:
The abovementioned mass transportation options are mostly found along Road 90 and two other main roads, with drop-off/pick-up points at certain locations, creating a significant mobility obstacle to those trying to start a trip from other parts of New Cairo.

Access to and out of New Cairo is highly dependent on a handful of major roads, the most significant nodes for vehicular traffic is the Road 90 intersection with the Ring Road. This creates significant traffic concentrations along Road 90, particularly during daily rush hour as many of those who work in New Cairo commute daily from other parts of Cairo. This often increases the drive from the campus to the Ring Road to 30 minutes (an average speed of 20 km/hr) during peak times. A transportation survey conducted by the AUC in 2013 showed that AUcians commute an average of 32.5 km each way, with commute times reaching up to two hours (Tutwiler et al, 2015). A second source of traffic concentrations is the concentration of leisure activities (shopping malls and dining establishments) along Road 90, which peak operations are in the evening and weekends. This has less impact on the AUC as the majority of campus activities are during the day (with the exception of graduate studies).

Walkability in New Cairo is extremely poor and at times unsafe. For instance Road 90 is a high-speed road that hosts an assortment of commercial and financial establishments on both sides and significant pedestrian traffic across it. Yet, it has no safe street crossing mechanisms for pedestrians, with the exception of a handful of speed bumps which pedestrians often rely on crossing to ensure vehicles are moving at a lower speed. This does not secure pedestrian safety and pedestrian-related accidents are common, particularly at night with limited vision and higher driving speeds.

Taking a closer look at walkability for the AUC community, despite the increasing number of commercial establishments around the campus, the city’s sprawling nature and pedestrian-unfriendly nature of Road 90 make it difficult for AUC community to access any nearby services without a car.
5.3 ACTIVITIES IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

AUC Community

The activities of the AUC community in the neighborhood could not be mapped during the workshop as it was conducted during the summer when academic year’s hiatus. This will be revisited as a priority in coming research. However the stakeholder interviews with commercial establishments in the area gave an insight into their customer market. As expected, many students frequent nearby dining establishments for study group meetings and social gatherings, which are also common with faculty who also sometimes visit dining establishments along Road 90, particularly the ones nearest to campus.

Other Neighbourhood Users

The conducted fieldwork largely focused on mapping informal commercial activity nodes, which are common along Road 90, often depending on the increased pedestrian flow at the mass transportation pick-up/drop-off points discussed earlier. These activities are mostly unlicensed mobile street food vendors offering affordable breakfast and lunch options, and makeshift tea stops. The peak operational hours for these activity hubs are during the daytime hours as their customer base is workers in the area. As discussed earlier, the city offers little-to-no affordable alternatives for this socio-economic group that constitutes a significant percentage of the workforce in the growing city.

On another level, shopping malls and dining establishments are major attraction points to residents, employees in New Cairo, and to residents of Heliopolis and Nasr City (Eastern suburbs of Cairo, West of the Ring Road). Contrary to the informal commercial activities discussed, these establishments thrive after working hours and on weekends. Despite being a newly-planned city that is yet to reach its target population, vehicle parking at popular venues such as shopping malls often overflow into the main streets, with cars double parking and/or parking in undesignated areas causing significant traffic congestions.
5.4 CONCLUSION

- The AUC campus is surrounded by numerous gated communities and commercial establishments catering to high-income individuals, with several construction sites promising more.
- New Cairo is a car-dependent, pedestrian-unfriendly city, with limited connections to the public transportation system in Cairo, forcing those without a private car to rely on private mass transportation options.
- The average one-way commute distance for AUCians is 32.5 km which reaches up to two hours. Two-thirds of the AUC community depends on the University’s bus service to access the campus, with the remaining using their private cars.
- Vehicular traffic congestions are common along Road 90, significantly influencing commute time from/to AUC campus.
- AUCians’ interaction with the city is primarily limited to visiting dining and retail establishments in the area.
- Informal commercial activity patterns can be found along Road 90, coinciding with mass transportation pick-up/drop-off points, and cater to the workers in the city.
6. THE EXTERNAL CONTEXT: LEGAL AND URBAN MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORKS

6.1 Urban Management Framework

New Cairo, along with the 27 new cities constructed over the past 40 years in Egypt are planned, governed and maintained by the New Urban Communities Authority (NUCA) – the government agency governing the urban development and management of new communities. Law No. (50/1979) stipulates that once the city utilities are “completed”, the jurisdiction is transferred to the governorate within which it falls (TADAMUN, n.d. d). In the meantime, NUCA manages new cities through the “City Administration” (Jīhāz al-Madina). The City Administration does not follow the traditional local administration structure in governorates; of particular interest is the absence of Local Popular Councils (LPCs) – the only elected public representation on the local level. As such, the public in these cities do not have elected representation on the local level to monitor the local executive branch (City Administration) or have avenues to voice their opinions on any development projects, or lack thereof.

6.2 Legislative Framework

Property Management
Unlike the majority of older parts of the city, New Cairo is not restricted by controlled rent legislation as it was constructed after the issuance of Law No. (4/1996), known as the “New Rent” Law. This legislation allows units constructed after the issuance of the law to be rented according to market value, removing prior restrictions on the tenancy agreement stipulated in Law No. (136/1981) (Awatta, 2015).

Commercial Use of Public Space
The same legislations discussed in the Tahrir Square campus case apply in New Cairo, however their implementation is not as forceful here. Despite operating illegally and occupying space at key junctures of Road 90, these commercial activities are often left to operate – this is not to say that they are not occasionally removed or disciplined by the city administration.

Political Expression in Public Space
The use of the public sphere for political expression is strictly regulated by the “Organization of the right to public meetings parades, and peaceful protests” Law No. (107/2013) as discussed in the Tahrir Square campus case. However, it has minimal impacts on this campus, as New Cairo is not considered one of the main destinations for protests and congregations of a political nature.

Traffic Management
The Traffic Authority is governed by the legislation outlined in the Tahrir Square case, but similar to the above issues, implementation is irregular. At instances when it is applied, the affordable fine, combined with wheel clamping of the vehicle, do not act as financial deterrents, and often contribute to traffic congestion, as the vehicle continues to obstruct traffic flow.

6.3 Real Estate Market Influences

As a continuously developing city, New Cairo is heavily influenced by urban developers. The cluster of high-income residential communities in New Cairo is no coincidence, NUCA land provision policies make it easier for large real estate developers to purchase land in new cities at affordable prices. Land is acquired in new cities through public tenders organized by NUCA and regulated by Law No. (89/1998) (El Badrawi, 2013). The majority of auctioned land plots are large plots suitable for real estate developers, with very limited market access to mid-income potential homeowners. This trend is one of the main contributors to the prevalence of high-income, gated residential communities in New Cairo, which are isolated from each other and more importantly segregated from “unfavourable” socio-economic strata.

The removal of restrictions of rental agreements combined with New Cairo emerging over the past ten years as one of the most popular destinations for high-income residential, commercial and financial users, resulted in continuous increases in real estate property in the city, which is among the highest in the Greater Cairo Region. It is worth noting that according to an interview with a real estate development company in New Cairo during the workshop, the value of undeveloped land surrounding the AUC campus is amongst the highest in New Cairo. It is important to note that as New Cairo attracts real estate long-term investments it also created a low occupancy rate in the city, with 64% housing units reported vacant in the 2006 census (Sims, 2012).

6.4 Conclusion

- The inconsistent implementation of legislation governing the commercial use of public space and traffic management result in the significant increase of informal commercial activities in New Cairo and unchecked traffic violations.
- Unlike the Tahrir Square campus, the New Cairo campus is not significantly impacted by political mobilization and expression.
- New Cairo is governed by the New Urban Communities Authority, which manages all new cities in Egypt. This administrative structure does not provide a mechanism for citizen engagement in local decision-making.
- The real estate market in New Cairo is in high demand for upscale residential, commercial and business uses, with land values surrounding the campus is one of the highest in the city.
PART III

AUC STRATEGIC VISION
7. INGREDIENTS FOR A UNIVERSITY ANCHOR STRATEGY

7.1 UNDERSTANDING OF A SUCCESSFUL ANCHOR STRATEGY

According to recent research, successful anchor strategies should include three primary features. As such these strategies should be: place-based, comprehensive and institutionally embedded. This section discusses how these features can catalyze the development of a successful anchor strategy for AUC Tahrir Square and New Cairo campuses.

Place-making
With its two diverse campus and neighborhoods, AUC has a dual challenge to tackle this issue. Not only is the Tahrir Square campus going through a redefinition as to the services it provides and activities it supports, with the move of core undergraduate activity to New Cairo in 2007, but the neighborhood itself is undergoing a form of re-branding as government institutions rethink issues of public space, heritage, informal economy and legal frameworks specific to this location. On the other side of the city, as yet, the sense of place in New Cairo is fluid and emerging. The direction where that emergence will transpire is not always clear, at least to most of the community constituents. This makes developing such a strategy so timely, in that AUC can play a role in possibly directing the "sense of place" of New Cairo, in a manner that is aligned with its interests and strategic vision, and through the dialogue that may emerge among stakeholders as a result of this initiative. "Place-making" hence becomes key to the prefacing of developing an anchor strategy. The themes of the ideas lab, which this report informs are core to this issue “how to create/preserve a just, livable and diverse neighborhood”. One of the proposed outcome objectives of this process is to explore and establish community ties and in some cases entities. These could take the form of AUC joining existing community councils on the larger stakeholder level, and perhaps creating its own community network for more operational and immediate small-scale issues.

Comprehensiveness
The data collected through the background research and workshops summarized in this report was structured and tackled with this comprehensiveness in mind. To develop an anchor strategy AUC must continue to think in an inter-disciplinary manner around neighboring issues of economy, urbanity, ecology, sustainability, accessibility, legality, society, etc.

Institutional Embeddedness
One of the proposed objectives of this process is to reflect on the institutional structure required to embed such anchor strategies throughout AUC’s policies and practices. With community engagement so central to AUC’s 2014-2019 Strategic Plan, and 4 of its 6 strategic plan task forces looking at issues of community, the ingredients for this institutional embedding are already in place. This process will help to identify, connect and hopefully mobilize these ingredients into a coherent mechanism, possibly with a central coordinating unit or office, with some similarities to AUB’s own Neighborhood Initiative.
7.2 COMMITMENT BY THE UNIVERSITY

AUC Civic Engagement History

The John D. Gerhart Center for Philanthropy and Civic Engagement was established in 2006 to further the University’s community outreach in Egypt and the region. It promotes social change and works to advance social responsibility and civic engagement. The center also provides numerous fellowships and seminars to cultivate the next generation of researchers concerned with public service. To achieve its mission, the Gerhart Center is a liaison between the academic institutions, civil society entities, and for-profit corporations.

The AUC’s Strategic Plan recognizes the University’s “need to ensure that we build on [our] assets to strengthen our campus culture, our community engagement, our national reputation and our international standing” (AUC, 2015, p. 21). The importance of civic engagement as well as the AUC anchor strategy are pointed out in the Strategic Plan; “Responding to the fast-changing demands of local opportunities and challenges in both downtown and New Cairo for faculty, staff and student housing, for transportation, and for community services and neighborhood amenities will require focused attention to community outreach and local partnerships” (Ibid, p.7).

The University’s institutional priorities, reflecting the AUC mission statement and the core values, emphasize the value of civic participation and community engagement.

We believe that a sound education not only prepares students for professional success but also for responsible citizenship and community engagement. The liberal arts tradition, with its emphasis on the broad education of a common core curriculum and the experiential learning of rich extracurricular programs, strengthens the curiosity and courage of AUC graduates, and promotes civic participation.

(AUC, 2015, p.4)

7.3 AUC NEIGHBOURHOOD INITIATIVE

Proposed Institutional Set-up

One of the objectives of the proposed “Universities and their Neighborhoods: an AUC-AUC Conversation” symposium is to propose and suggest structures and mechanisms through which the AUC can internalize the concepts and policies of community engagement throughout its institution. This may take several forms, including the initiation of a unit, center, office or officer responsible for catalyzing and managing community engagement initiatives. This entity or individual would act as a hinge between the University and its neighborhood stakeholders, moderating and seeking joint interests. This would require first a clear audit and understanding of existing community-related initiatives across campus, of which there are many, and their linking together in a network under this entity. This approach is very much aligned with the integration of the University’s current strategic plan, in all activities, and at all levels of the institution’s operations.

Stakeholders Engagement Strategy

The University envisions the full development of New Cairo by 2019, and that by then the AUC community will be reaping the fruits of this expansion (AUC, 2015). The surroundings of the New Cairo campus has already witnessed significant residential and commercial transformation since the campus was constructed. The Strategic Plan presents several initiatives to develop the New Cairo campus community such as the Community Council for each campus, with the purpose to “develop regular consultation and information-sharing with local developers, retailers and residents in New Cairo in order to keep abreast of developments and to ascertain the kinds of services and programming that would be most appreciated by our neighbors” (AUC, 2015, p. 22). Also emphasized is the importance to be responsive to how neighboring developments impact the University’s operation, security, and access (AUC, 2015).

The AUC Strategic Plan projects significant involvement with the University’s neighborhoods and communities, based upon the commitment to being an anchor institution, to provide a highly livable surrounding for its students, faculty and staff as well as strengthening civic participation and community engagement, being a core value in the liberal arts tradition of the AUC.
Potential Interventions and Partnerships

- Continuing education in New Cairo campus
- Student exchange with neighbouring universities
- Outreach to public/private schools

Education

- Diverse programming of AUC public events
- New Cairo-centric periodic newspaper

Events & Programming

- Public Green Spaces

Services

- Public awareness campaigns
- Support local social initiatives

Community Development

- Marketing AUC events in commercial establishments
- Partnership agreements with neighbouring dining

Commercial

- Safety and walkability in New Cairo

Mobility
7.4 CONCLUSION

- The AUC envisions future community engagement within a place-based, comprehensive, and institutionally embedded framework to successfully develop anchor strategies in each of its campuses.

- The AUC continues to exhibit a commitment to civil engagement in its Strategic Plan, recognizing the need to reach out to the neighboring community to ensure the sustainability and thrive of the University.

- An institutional set-up is needed within the AUC to systemically promote the proposed type of community engagement and ensure its success and continuity. This set-up is in line with the Community Council initiative presented in the AUC Strategic Plan.

FOOTNOTES

10 For more on the Capital City can be found at http://thecapitalcairo.com

11 Research and reports focusing on sustainability at the AUC and the annual “AUC’s Carbon Footprint” report can be found online at http://www.aucegypt.edu/about/sustainability

12 Refer to Sims (2012) and (2015) for more on the development of New Cairo.

13 It is worth noting that the AUC maintains a community garden near the faculty housing across from the University.

14 Microbuses are privately-operated buses of 12-15 passenger capacity, common in Egyptian cities as a relatively affordable mass transportation option.

15 It is worth noting that none of the 27 new cities in Egypt have made that transition to a governorate’s jurisdiction.

16 The strategic plan task forces reports are available online at http://www.aucegypt.edu/about/StrategicPlanning/Pages/Documents-and-Reports.aspx
Looking to the next ten years AUC has focused on 4 institutional priorities around which this initiative should align itself:

- Education for Citizenship and Service
- Research Reflecting Innovation and Impact
- Outreach Enhancing Engagement and Access
- Management with Sustainability and Integrity

Strategically AUC has identified that the comprehensive environment within which it operates will be an instrumental factor in achieving success in these priorities. The initiative emerging from the dialogue at hand around AUC and its Neighborhoods will be central to this. Furthermore, AUC sees its coming decade informed by the following strategic objectives within the next five years:

- Strategic Objective I: Make Our Place in the World: Egypt’s Global University
- Strategic Objective II: Unleash Learning: Opening the AUC Classroom
- Strategic Objective III: Location, Location, Location: AUC as an Anchor and a Magnet
- Strategic Objective IV: Instilling Integrity, Accountability and Sustainability: Managing Continuous Change

As it is apparent the thoughtful development of an anchor strategy for AUC, both institutionally and geographically, is central to how we envision the university’s next ten years.
REFERENCES


ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report is prepared by the “Universities and their Neighbourhoods” technical coordination and research team comprised of:

- Magda Mostafa, CANG
- Khaled Abdelhalim, GAPP
- Khaled Tarabieh, CANG
- Hajer Awatta, Senior Researcher
- Salma Belal, Researcher
- Christina Jimenez Mattson, Research

with contribution from the student research teams of New Cairo and Tahrir Campus in Context workshops conducted in August and October 2015 respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New Cairo Campus in Context Workshop Participants</th>
<th>Tahrir Campus in Context Workshop Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 2015</td>
<td>October 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahmed Nashaat Eltoukhy</td>
<td>Ahmed Gamal El-Attar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahmed Jamal Abdul Kader</td>
<td>Ahmed Jamal Abdul Kader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashraf Osam Ahmed</td>
<td>Alaa Sayed El-Halaboush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaa Sayed El-Halaboush</td>
<td>Amina Sayed Khier Eldin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hussin Mohamed Hussin</td>
<td>Anna Rowell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Tarek Kamel Estafan</td>
<td>Anne Ayman Saleh Badawy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryam Kamal Ismael</td>
<td>Hussin Mohamed Hussin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mostafa Mohamed Mahmoud</td>
<td>Ibrahim Mostafa Elmaggar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muhamad El-Fouly</td>
<td>Mahmoud Aly Elmaggar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nermin Adel Dessouky</td>
<td>Maryam Kamal Ismael</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reem Ahmed Bakir</td>
<td>Mazem Moussa Eissa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youstina Atef Michael Baky</td>
<td>Nouran Osama Mostafa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Omar Assem Mehany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Youstina Atef Michael Baky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zeinab Khaled Nadeem</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Special thanks goes to strategic partners: Medhat Dorra, Space Consult (New Cairo Campus case); CLUSTER, Cairo (Tahrir Campus case) for their provision of base maps and other select materials. Content material produced as a result of the partnership with CLUSTER during the Tahrir Campus workshop, where applicable, is the joint intellectual property of AUC, AUB and CLUSTER.

All visual materials in this report are produced by the AUC research team and the AUC Campus in Context workshop participants, unless stated otherwise.

This work as a whole is the shared copyright of the American University in Cairo and the American University of Beirut.

The underwriting of the background research and symposium from the AUB Neighborhood Initiative’s support from the Ford Foundation’s Higher Education for Social Justice Program, with special acknowledgement to Dr. Moushira el-Geziri, Program Officer. Additional support was provided by the American University of Beirut and the American University in Cairo.